

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 and 23-32 are all the claims pending in the application, including new claims 31 and 32 added by the present Amendment.

Claims 5, 7-21, and 24 are allowed.

In reply to the Response filed December 2, 2003 and the interview held January 20, 2004, the Examiner has repeated the previous claim rejections. Thus, claims 1-4, 6, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by previously-cited Yamakita et al. (US 6,285,780, hereafter "Yamakita"). Claims 25-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Yamakita in view of Applicants' Admitted Prior Art AAPA).

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections with the following comments.

In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the iridial granule of Yamakita provides a normalization processing condition used in subsequent processing. The Examiner further asserts in the "Response to Arguments" that Yamakita's process of obtaining a normalization processing condition includes the processing of an incoming light signal into an image data signal, which includes a portion representing an iridial granule. Applicant disagrees and submits that the iridial granule is simply part of the image data read by Yamakita's apparatus. See col. 2, lines 3-5. In other words, the iridial granule is not a normalization processing condition. Rather, the iridial granule is part of the unprocessed image data. The iridial granule in Yamakita is at most a piece of information that is used to determine the normalization processing condition, but is not the normalization processing condition itself.

Furthermore, Yamakita fails to disclose a reading side normalization processing condition determining means for determining a normalization processing condition. As shown in

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FIG. 5, Yamakita discloses that the iridial granule undergoes a process in the geometric normalizer 3, in which normalizing parameters are measured. See col. 11, lines 59-61. Since the geometric normalizer 3 is on the receiving side of Yamakita's apparatus, Yamakita fails to disclose the reading side normalization processing condition determining means for determining a normalization processing condition claimed in claim 1.

Therefore, claim 1 is not anticipated by Yamakita.

Claims 2-4, 6 and 23 are not anticipated by Yamakita for reasons analogous to those for claim 1.

Claims 25-30 are allowable over the prior art, at least because of their dependence from claims 1-4, 6 and 23, respectively.

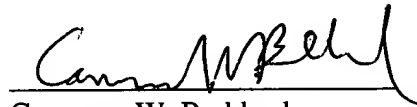
Claims 31 and 32 are added by the present Amendment to further define the present invention. These claims are believed to be allowable at least because of their dependence from claims 3 and 4, respectively.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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